

After-Action Reports - Scenarios

A80 - Commando Schenke

Just finished playing this one as the Germans against Gary Torrenga's Russians as a training match.

Lots of cool toys for the Germans (MMG, HMG, 2xFT, 4xDC, Assault Engineers), but yours truly had not a clue how to use them the first two turns.

Opening turn saw me build two kill stacks trying to crack open Gary's less-defended left flank. Huge mistake. Didn't deploy, didn't use the HS to strip concealment. Also set the engineers up in the rear, where they couldn't use Smoke at all, and also put them woefully out of position for a couple of turns. Gave Gary too many -2 shots ... sheesh.

Gary skulked and then skulked some more. Made sense to me ... he's on the defensive, why take unnecessary risks?

On my second turn, I started to use deployment properly, skipped the prep fire, started using Smoke, and began making some headway toward my goal ... the big fortified building at 1X4. Unfortunately, my initial setup caused some gaps in my advance, and this would prove costly later in the game.

I made progress, skirting between buildings, slipping behind smokescreens, using those HS to do "recon" work for me. Lost an 838 in OG with a DC when I missed an open LOS that I hadn't laid Smoke to try and cover.

My advance was mainly up the middle and to my right ... major mistake. I never threatened his right at all until we were in close and it was too late. I lost my timidity from turns 1 and 2, and became aggressive, gaining ground at a fairly rapid pace ... but at a cost.

Unfortunately for me, those first two turns cost me time and territory, and I was forced to make too many uncovered moves to try and make up for lost time. I lost another 838 and his FT in a mad scramble across the street in front of the fortress.

By turn six, I had actually entered the building. But Gary had moved everyone back to the rear of the building to gain concealment. This tactic served a two-fold purpose ... 1) it would make my AFPh attacks less effective ... 2) it would cause my DC attacks to create Breaches to be quartered against his units ... a 6+4 won't do much more than cause noise.

After all my attacks (expending 2 DC in the process, with nothing to show for it), it was obvious that I would need a minor miracle to win the game. I couldn't advance into the fortified locations (I didn't so much as pin a single unit of his), and would have but one turn left to try and break/eliminate every single unit left in the building.

In short, I ran out of time ... time I wasted the first two turns of the game because of very poor setup and even poorer tactics. However, I learned, first-hand, a few things:

1) Deploy ... deploy ... deploy. If you have the "extra" manpower, use those HS to probe and scout (who said they did away with Scouts in ASL??) enemy positions, especially ? or HIP positions. I ran a 247 around back of the main building on the last turn to interdict the street behind the 1X4 building, which would force his units to surrender, since they would have started the RtPh ADJACENT to my units. Good thinking, except the dice didn't cooperate.

2) Smoke them engineers. Unless you CX 'em, they get Smoke on a dr of 5 or less ... and you have to put them right up front to let them lay down the cover needed to cross some very tricky OG.

3) Setups are key. Gary's theory is that each and every mistake can be translated into a number of game turns lost trying to make up for it. It's true as true can be. I lost two turns jacking around trying to recover from a bad setup ... those two turns killed me ... 'cause when I got to the building, I was so shot up and disorganized, my forces were rendered ineffective.

Let me just say that Gary is a great guy to play against. He was helpful in explaining not only ASL rules as they related to particular situations, but was also helpful in showing me how units work together to achieve a common goal. I think it could fairly be said that my MPh got better as the game wore on, and that I showed that I could learn and apply new ideas fairly quickly. I just need the practice.

It was well worth the time and effort to play against him, and I'm hoping to be able to report future playings against him as well. All-in-all, a super ASL experience ... one that I have learned a great deal from ... and hope to be able to apply to other opponents and games, too.

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